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from *Snuhli*. My informant's grandchildren regard themselves as *Snuhli* boys, and their names are embodied in myths of that village, although their forbears have not lived there for five generations. There is no reason to suppose this case exceptional. Other instances were obtained of movements of people from one village to another at earlier times, and there seems no cause to doubt the general accuracy of these. Names embodied in the origin myths of different towns are used as prerogatives and have been potent factors in keeping their memory alive. Uncertainties and inaccuracies there must be in the foregoing list, but on the whole it appears to be fairly reliable, since few contradictions were received from different informants.

Accounts obtained of the same ceremonies from the descendants of people of different villages were found in most cases to be identical. There were a few differences in custom between the people of *Stuix* and those of the other upper valley towns on the one hand, and the inhabitants of the lower valley on the other. These will be mentioned when necessary, but on the whole the inhabitants of the Bella Coola valley can be considered as a tribal entity.

Boas (p. 48) gives a list of Bella Coola towns which agrees fairly well with the above. Among his villages are included *Pe·əsl̥ə* (no. 4), *Nuɬɣɣtskwan·e* (no. 7), and *Nusälsum* (no. 16).[11] All the older people agreed that these are the names of streams, though settlements located on them may have been known by the same designations. Names of the five villages recorded by Boas, nos. 6, 8, 9, 19, and 24, were not known by several old men questioned on the subject.

The villages of the Bella Coola valley did not form a political unit; each was independent. A common language was spoken throughout and the inhabitants of the different towns recognized that their origins and customs were similar. This was also recognized to be the case with regard to the people living on South Bentinck Arm, and at the head of Dean Channel.

[11] Using in each case the spelling of this monograph.

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from the moon and stated that there were mountains and snow on it. It is commonly stated that the marks on the moon represent a man carrying a bucket.

The stars figure but slightly either in Bella Coola mythology or thought; it is not even known who made them. Two in the Great Bear constellation are called respectively *Tpiksta* and *X̱inx̱inas*, "Little Girls." A lone star in the same part of the sky, named *A'lox*, is said to be following the girls to the forest for illicit intercourse.

Moon, stars, and above all the sun, were, and still are to a certain extent, used by the Bella Coola in computing the passage of time. There are no individuals with the definite prerogative of keeping count of time, but formerly wise old men used to do so.[4] Differences of opinion were the rule rather than the exception, a condition which often led to bitter disputes concerning the proper date for starting the winter ceremonials. Boas (p. 41) has recorded the Bella Coola calendar in greater detail than the present writer has been able to do. The making of calendrical observations is a lost art, and the following list of the months was all that could be learnt. It will be noted that these agree with Boas in regard to the months in the early part of the year, but not in those between the summer and winter solstices; no explanation is offered for this disparity.

First moon after the summer solstice: *Sikālamtak*, which has the significance, "The Time for Sockeye Salmon to Ascend the River."

Second moon after the summer solstice: *Si'islalitl*, "The Time for Eating Dog Salmon."

Third moon after the summer solstice: *Si'iswai·stl*, "The Time for Eating Cohoe Salmon."

Fourth moon after the summer solstice: *Siqālx̱am*, "The Time for Gathering Fern Root," or *Sidakəos di Ano'likwolxaix*,

[4] A Kimsquit informant stated that there were professional calendrical experts in his home, when he was a young lad although members of the *kusiut* society (II, chap. 1) sometimes attended to this matter.

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773 hanging a number of bird and animal cloaks, representing ravens, eagles, whales, grizzly bears, black bears, and a few others. *Alquntăm* asked each individual which of these cloaks he preferred to wear. One selected a raven, another an eagle, and so on. Each donned his choice from the wall and immediately became the bird or animal chosen. *Alquntăm* gave each man or woman one or more names, and some food in compressed form; then sent him down in avian or mammal form. Even the animals could travel through the air like birds, and each landed on the peak of a mountain in the Bella Coola country, took off his cloak, and reassumed human form. The discarded coverings floated back up to *Nusmăt·a*. A few individuals, instead of coming to earth in animal form, swarmed down posts which stretched between the worlds.

177 773 This myth is fervently believed by the Bella Coola. Even Christian Indians, though they readily admit the biblical creation as applied to the white race, remain convinced of the manner in which their own ancestors came into being. At the present time, though most ancient beliefs are rapidly passing away, few, if any, Bella Coola doubt this account of the creation of their forefathers. Their conviction rests not only on the religious aspect of their life, but on the sociological. A man's [551] [424] most treasured possessions are the name brought down from above by his ancestor in the beginning of time, the knowledge of the form taken by that ancestor, and information about the place where he landed. A collection of myths of this kind is given in vol. I, chap. vi. Lacking knowledge of his first ancestor's form, a Bella Coola has slight chance of becoming a [622] [554] [567] chief; such lore is the birthright of every descendant of one of these first people, and those without it are almost certain to be the offspring of slaves. The social aspects of creation myths will be described later; at this point a broad outline must suffice. *Nusmăt·a*, "The House of Myths," is the place in which these myths were made, and are now stored, two reasons for its importance in the eyes of the Bella Coola.

[775] *Nusmăt·a* is not only connected with the history of an indi-

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396 one at Restoration Bay. He had reached the point where he
* 776 needed help to turn the craft over, and one day, returning to his work, he heard the sound of many voices. He tarried for a few minutes, and when he reached his canoe it had been turned over as he desired.

On that occasion the beings who assisted the canoe-maker appear to have had definite form, and certainly to have displayed physical strength, but this extreme anthropomorphizing is unusual with respect to the assistance given to carpenters. The construction of a canoe is an arduous and difficult work; the person who has made one is regarded by his fellows with re- [554] spect mixed with envy, and it is tacitly assumed that he must have received more than human assistance. Considering the number of anthropomorphic beings known to the Bella Coola, it is not surprising that some individuals should assume that the successful carpenter must have had assistance from one of them, but to other Bella Coola the explanation would be in the intangible help vouchsafed to him by some kind of supernatural power.

* 776 Similar intangible power is believed to be evident in a per-
828 son's thoughts. If a man receive either good or evil from a comrade it is his duty and privilege to repay. He intends to do so, but only a good man can carry out the resolution. What a white man would attribute to forgetfulness, procrastination, or lassitude, the Bella Coola say is caused by the intervention of *Sniqwalnkaista*, who steals away his thoughts. It is doubtful whether this being is considered to have any definite form; rather he is a barrier, normally situated within the doorway of every house. The ideas of a strong man are able to surmount the obstacle, but *Sniqwalnkaista* abstracts those of a weakling, and directs him to matters of no importance.

372 Another intangible supernatural being is that which de-
* 776 vours firewood. The Bella Coola say that no matter how well a fire may be provided with fuel when a person sits down to a meal, it is certain to be either out, or nearly so, when he has finished eating. The natural explanation does not satisfy

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THE WASH-BASIN

A third supernatural element which must be in good condition if a Bella Coola is to prosper in life, is a *nusx̱ulusta*, wash-basin. In the land above, *Ālquntām* has a large one filled with water which, having been constructed by himself, is replete with power. When a child is born, a small part of this receptacle, with its contents, is reserved for him; the supernatural artisans choose the actual section, but it is *Ālquntām* who gives them the ability to do so. A fortunate man, whose ventures are successful and to whom goods are attracted, is said to have a good wash-basin; whereas the ill-luck of an unfortunate person is attributed, among other reasons, to the small size of his supernatural vessel. The Bella Coola have no clear ideas about the connection between an individual and his wash-basin. Some state that it remains in the land above; others believe that its intangible essence comes to a child at birth and grows up with him, always near his body, as if it were the offspring of the basin in the land above. As long as it remains in motion the owner continues in good health and prosperity, but if it becomes sluggish he falls ill. Long ago, shamans knew how to reanimate a wash-basin, but since the time of the first people, when supernatural ability was common, this has been a lost art. Senile decay is attributed to listlessness of this possession.

River water, being a creation of *Ālquntām*, is akin to the water in his basin above. Boys are always advised to bathe in the river at dawn; the act is termed *ax̱ulusam*, a word connected with *nusx̱ulusta*. A prayer is uttered while washing. The combination of verbal appeal and the application of water strengthens the petitioner's wash-basin and so increases his chances for prosperity. Until a few years ago, this practice was almost universal. Water is always considered a strange substance, obviously a supernatural creation, and believed to be the chief means of sustenance for a child after being weaned.[29]

[29] This may be a mere rationalization.

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This endogamic principle will be described in greater detail in vol. I, chap. VII, but mention of it here has been necessary to explain the composition of the ancestral family.

In recent years there has been a tendency for some men to marry foreign women in order that they, or their children, might obtain new prerogatives. Thus a trend towards exogamy has arisen from the same reason which is supposed to have caused endogamy. The offspring of such marriages cannot enjoy the feeling of strength and comfort that comes from the membership of both parents in the same ancestral family, but some individuals have felt that this was offset by the gain of highly desirable foreign prerogatives. It is said that this practice was initiated by a certain *Potlas*, father of a man about sixty years old in 1923. White influence probably had nothing to do with this radical innovation, although its wide adoption has been made more easy by the establishment of peaceful conditions on the coast.

Strong as is the belief in a common ancestry, it is unlikely that this would have sufficed to hold together the members of the ancestral family, without some definite prerogatives. These are of two kinds: names and land.

NAMES

The fundamental principle governing Bella Coola nomenclature is that each name must have originated in connection with some event of comparative importance. It is unthinkable to apply a casual designation to a child. At a person's death his name, or names, may be transmitted to a relative, and it is proper that the owner of a name should know when, by whom, and for what reason, it was first created. Tradition affirms that, before coming to this earth, the first people were all given designations by *Alquntăm*; these have been carefully handed down and are still in use. One name cannot be given to two individuals; instances occur of two people having the same one, but in such cases they have different origins. One person may have several names of different kinds, each carrying

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The ancestral family consists of those whose ancestral names, embodying definite prerogatives, are embodied in a single origin myth.

A stranger finds it easier to understand why names are so carefully maintained within the ancestral family by thinking of them as symbols of prerogatives, but it must be emphasized that the Bella Coola preserve with equal jealousy those designations of which the only prerogative is the marking of thin actual membership.

If, then, the ancestral family be regarded as a group possessing a large number of name-prerogatives, it may well be asked how these are distributed among the members. The first point to be emphasized is that the ancestral family is a unit held together without definite social mechanism. There is no accepted "head" of the family, nor are there any clearly formulated laws governing the transmission of the name-prerogatives. Before death a man usually calls together his relatives and bequeaths,[9] according to his desire, his personal property in slaves and canoes, and his intangible property in names. Such a designation does not become the property of the new owner unless he is able to validate his ownership by a distribution of presents; meanwhile the name is "dead." If, during this period, some other member of the ancestral family should desire it for a child, or for himself, he can take possession of it by the customary distribution of presents. In doing so he would anger the legatee, but the latter cannot himself use the appellation since it is already in use. Even at the present time there are bitter quarrels over the assumption of names, and such have certainly occurred for many generations. If a man can validate fairly promptly a name willed to him, it is most unusual for anyone else to try to forestall him.

If a man dies intestate, his sons consider themselves his normal heirs, and the most respected of them validates for himself as many names as he desires or is able to assume. Disputes are not as common as might be expected since the

[9] In cases of sudden death or failure to make a will confusion sometimes occurs.

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423 614 is no doubt that a man tends to lose those rights in property which are strictly his, if they are located at a distance. Thus several men claim that they are legally entitled to hunt at Kitlobe, but from mere difficulty of access neither they nor their fathers have exercised the right, and it would have been lost in the course of a few generations, even without the utter decay of custom which has followed the advent of the white man. Practically, a man hunts only in the grounds of those ancestral families in whose origin myths he has names, though, theoretically, he is entitled to hunt on any hunting-ground of any ancestral family of which he is a member whether or not he holds a duly validated name from its origin myth. It is not necessary to confirm the right to property as with a name, though a validated ancestral name is the usual mark of a man's right to that area of the ancestral family to which that designation belongs. Although the ownership of land in distant regions is of little practical importance, it is, none the less, a [554] matter of great pride to a man to feel that he has rights in many places. The efforts of an individual to make good those [721] claims has often led to bloodshed; in fact, one intelligent old man stated that property disputes were the principal cause for [554] war in British Columbia. A person who lacks hunting-grounds is little better than a slave, whereas one who has much land is important.

The Bella Coola regard land as almost inalienable. Though a man does not own the land of his wife's ancestral family, he can use it and his children have full rights to it. Conversely, a wife can gather berries on her husband's land, though it is [574] not hers. A guest at a village may be allowed to use the territory of his hosts, but it does not become his. In the old 727 days wars between the coastal tribes were common, but though 423 slaves were taken freely, land was never seized; such is unthinkable to a Bella Coola. In fact, several of the older people [567] inquired how it had been possible, in the first world war, for the allies, whose cause they believed to be righteous, to annex territory from Germany. If the victors had killed or enslaved

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614 The recent decay of Bella Coola culture may have destroyed traces of more definite obligations with respect to the ancestral [182] family, but all the evidence indicates that it has always been a fluid unit. Its very lack of functions makes it difficult to [128] discuss, and the above account was pieced together from scraps of information collected from many different people at various times; yet, intangible though it be, it is a very real unit to the Bella Coola and pervades their life. Each individual knows those to whom he is related. In many cases the exact kinship is lost, but it is remembered that a man from such-and-such a village married a woman from another village, and it is proved from the use by their descendants of names from the same origin myth. The concept of physical strength imparted by a closely akin ancestry is always present and gives a person the real "power" in the village founded by those first ancestors 614 of his. For the ancestral family is usually thought of in terms 621 of villages. A man belongs to the village where his first ancestor came to earth, though he is equally a member of other towns into which his ancestors may have married. A ● [554] man without ancestry, without *sal'alam*, is a miserable creature; he has no home in this world, or, theoretically, in the world to come. The ancestral family is a unit essentially held together by the ties of sentiment and pride of ancestry.

614 In addition to the above social elements of the ancestral 827 family, it is felt that all its members have certain tendencies. If one of the first ancestors had a certain physical peculiarity, or met with a particular kind of fortune, either good or bad, his descendants are more likely to experience the same than any other people. These tendencies may skip many generations, and may be inherited either through the mother or the father. In fact, Bella Coola belief on this point closely agrees with modern knowledge of heredity; the term for such an inheritable tendency is *sälaxälém* or *sälaxmadjat*. Such characteristics are:

(1) Proficiency in using tools;
(2) Ability as a hunter;

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614 621 is a more obvious social grouping than the ancestral family, though it is of the latter that a man is most proud. The member of a small, unimportant village often describes himself as a native of a neighbouring, larger one when at a distance from his home, simply as a matter of convenience.

Even before the coming of the white man, village sites were abandoned and people took up their residence with friends or relatives elsewhere. In fact, mythology contains instances of [973] [361] such migrations at the very beginning of time. In cases of this kind, memory of the earlier home has been preserved for many generations, and may perhaps be the explanation of the many villages which are described as two, and which have two names. In the early days immigrants seem always to have been welcome; they added to the numerical strength of the village, and the original inhabitants enjoyed boasting to the newcomers of their descent from the first settlers. Since any group forced to abandon their own homes naturally moved to those of relatives, there is no difficulty in understanding the process by [582] which they continued to intermarry with their new neighbours. Thus two, or even more ancestral families, inhabiting one village tended to form a closely inter-related stock. In rare instances, two unrelated ancestral families may have become inhabitants of the same village, which would unquestionably lead to intermarriage.

In most cases the endogamic tendencies already described cause the village community to be largely members of one ancestral family. In addition there are always other occu- [563] pants; strangers who have fled from their homes and sought [567] refuge among the Bella Coola; the offspring of illicit intercourse [554] with slaves; guests; foreigners, especially Carriers temporarily resident in Bella Coola; and finally slaves, without status in the community. The real inhabitants, those whose power is firmly planted in the village, are the reputed descendants of the first group of settlers, and accordingly a relative coming to [553] dwell in a village usually endeavours to obtain a name from the origin myth of the ancestral family occupying it, and thus

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establish himself with the traditions of his new home. This is another illustration of the patrilineal tendency of the whole organization.

Politically, the village is the most important Bella Coola unit. Usually, though not always related to one another, the inhabitants are always friends. If an attack is made on a village by a hostile war-party, all the inhabitants suffer equally. On the other hand, if the residents decide to attack another settlement, there is no compulsion for anyone to share the burden. Each individual, with the exception of slaves, follows his own inclination. In the case of murder or other wrong inflicted by an individual, the responsibility rests on his immediate family, not the village. Factions within the village seem to have been unimportant; individual jealousies were common, and often led to murder, but if a family became unpopular or considered itself aggrieved, it usually moved to another village. Neighbouring settlements were generally on friendly terms and often assisted each other in war, but this was not compulsory. Indeed, cases are known in which a war-party from the outer coast, about to attack *Sunet*, passed within a quarter of a mile of *Kempt* without its inhabitants even warning their threatened neighbours.

As far as internal organization is concerned, the village is as fluid a unit as are most Bella Coola groupings. If one individual has attained a position of eminence through the potlatch system (vol. I, chap. IV), he is "chief" of the village, and his advice is generally followed. If several men have approximately the same importance, there is no dominating figure. In any case, a chief lacks executive authority, and such obedience as he receives is due to his personal influence. Some slight deference is paid to the man who uses the name of the eldest of the first group of settlers, the first chief, but this is not sufficient to warrant the title of "chief" with the significance usually attached to the term. The important members of the village are accustomed to meet for the discussion of ceremonial mat-

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601 Coola social organization, and of the absence of standardized obligations based upon specific relationships.

Slaves

567 Since a slave was* without status in the Bella Coola community, it is perhaps incorrect to include a description of [559] slavery in a chapter on social organization; but as slaves lived in the Bella Coola villages, it seems reasonable to include them when dealing with the different units of the tribe. It was 162 impossible to obtain an accurate estimate of their number in 567 Bella Coola; slavery has been so long abandoned that the present natives could only hazard vague guesses. Judging from conversational remarks by elderly men, it seems probable that in the old days there was a considerable slave population in every Bella Coola village, comprising at times as much as thirty to forty per cent of the total population.

567 When a party raided a village most of the inhabitants were 927 slain, but some, especially children, young adults, or famous chiefs were captured. As far as could be learned, once a captive had reached Bella Coola he was in little danger, since torture or systematic slaying after the heat of battle had subsided was not a Bella Coola characteristic. The leader of the expedition retained many of the captives as his own slaves, and distributed others among his followers. Anyone, chief [422] or commoner, could own slaves in the same way that he could own any other type of goods.

567 Like any other commodity, slaves were bought and sold. 497 The Bella Coola were usually so well provided with salmon that they were able to exchange these fish with the members [622] of other tribes for slaves. Lack of strong chieftainship among [726] the Bella Coola hindered their success in war, so that most of [431] their slaves were obtained by trade. To the same category [773] belong those obtained as presents at potlatches. If, however, a member of one of the tribes on the lower Fraser River was [648]

*One of the first efforts of the white man's establishment in British Columbia was the freeing of all slaves. Consequently the past tense is used in this section.

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given as a slave to a Bella Coola, he was treated as a guest."[1] Slaves were bartered between Bella Coola individuals as a matter of course. Their value depended on sex, ability, and industriousness, as well as on supply and demand. When there was an over-supply, the value of a slave fell to twenty or thirty salmon, but whenever an owner found that someone wished to purchase a particular slave he endeavoured to raise the price. If a foreigner borrowed goods in Bella Coola he usually had to leave a relative as pledge. Thus, not many years ago, a *Xuxais* Indian, from near Ootsa Lake, borrowed goods from a Kimsquit man and left his son as pledge. The goods were not returned, so the son was sold as a slave to the people of Kitimat.

It was not uncommon for a Bella Coola to lose his freedom by gambling. At *lehɑl* especially, a player who had exhausted his goods not infrequently wagered his children, or in extreme cases, himself. If he lost, his children, or himself, became the property of the winner. Unless speedily repurchased by some relative, such slaves were usually sold or given away at the first opportunity to a member of a foreign tribe, since it was considered improper for a man to hold a member of his own tribe in servitude. The same course of action was taken on those rare occasions when one Bella Coola village fought against its neighbour and prisoners were taken.

To the Bella Coola, who still consider a man's "power" in the land as dependent to a considerable extent on his ancestral myth, a slave's greatest misfortune lay in the fact that he had no ancestral home, and hence no rights.

"No slaves came to earth with the first people," they say.

A slave was a stranger in a strange land, unsupported by a chain of ancestors reaching back to the beginning of time. On the whole, captives taken in war were better treated than other slaves since it was felt that such a misfortune might occur to anyone at any time. They were frequently ransomed by their

[1] This is said to be an ancient practice, due to the fact that several of the forefathers of the Bella Coola came to earth in that region and were on friendly terms with the inhabitants. It is conceivable that this tradition may have reference to the breaking away of the Bella Coola from the main Salish stock.

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to arrange his marriage with some female slave; once this had taken place, the actual treatment meted out to him differed only slightly from that shown to a member of the family. In former times it would probably have been difficult for a stranger to tell married slaves from the members of the Bella Coola community until he had been long enough in the country to understand more than appeared on the surface.

Marriages between Bella Coola men and slave women were not infrequent, while like partnerships between slave men and even the daughters of chiefs were not unknown. In such cases the status of the children depended on the performance of ceremonies to wash from them the stain of their slave blood. While the mother was still pregnant her husband would call guests, not only from his own village, but from foreign tribes as well. Presents were given, according to the wealth of the donor, often aided by his immediate family, to "wash the child." Such ceremonies would be repeated several times before birth, and again at that time. Bella Coola sentiment was that such presents gagged the recipients; they knew of the dishonourable ancestry of the child, but the receipt of gifts on his account had wiped away the disgrace. Such a child was able to inherit prerogatives from his mother's old home, duly validated in Bella Coola by valuables, and by his own lavish presents he could silence those who remembered the blot on his ancestry. Similar procedure was carried out if a free woman married a slave. Unless her husband were already owned by one of her family, the woman's father or brother would arrange to purchase him. Then, aided by him, they would give the same type of presents to clear the children from the taint of slavery. If this were not done, the children had only the status of slaves, though, born and brought up in Bella Coola and associating from infancy with their master's children, they were virtually considered members of the family.

"Washing the child," during pregnancy and at birth, sufficed to cover the taint on its history, but in later years if such a person failed to continue to give ceremonies, people would again talk of his short-comings. So, too, for the child or grand-

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431 child of a mixed Bella Coola and slave marriage. As long as
567 such an one maintained a position of importance in the com-
munity by the distribution of presents, nothing was said, but
578 if he should fail to do so, he could be, and frequently was,
[554] insulted by having references made to his ancestry. In case
of dispute or rivalry it was always a temptation to refer to
such a blot, but if he had atoned for it with presents, references
were considered improper. Unquestionably, memory of slave
534 ancestry was forgotten in course of time if the line was influ-
567 ential, although recollections of the stigma were always car-
ried for at least two or three generations. At the present time
the most influential woman in Bella Coola, the one who has
given most presents, is the granddaughter of a Smith Inlet
slave. This man had lived in Bella Coola for many years and
had married another slave, by whom he had a son. The latter
became the husband of an influential *Stuix* woman. When she
became pregnant, her family secured the liberation of her
husband, and gave many presents to "wash the child." One
daughter was born to this couple, the woman just mentioned.
Her mother's relatives were influential, and her father was
[555] such an expert canoe-maker that he was able to win an honour-
able position for his daughter by presents of his handicraft.
The woman, possessed of considerable ability herself, has been
able to give many ceremonies and so reach a position of emi-
nence. No one dares insult her by mentioning her ancestry,
but everyone knows about it and if her children should fail to
hold their position, they would be open to insult on this score.
The woman has validated names and myths derived both from
her mother and father, without explaining how the Smith Inlet
traditions came to Bella Coola.

To sum up, it may be said that the position of slaves in Bella Coola was not particularly onerous, though it depended entirely on the will of their masters. Without status in the
[182] community, a slave could have been abused by a cruel owner, though the public life of the village, where all lived and ate together, tended to break down the unsystematically enforced differences of rank.

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CHAPTER IV

RANK

Chieftainship—Sisaok Society—The Potlatch

CHIEFTAINSHIP

IN the previous chapter have been described the beliefs of the Bella Coola concerning the origin of names, and the attitude of pride with which they regard those embodied in ancestral myths, which carry with them prized prerogatives. But the unsystematic method by which ancestral names are inherited is sufficient to show that their possession, though valued for sentimental reasons, is not enough to make the owner a chief. On what, then, is Bella Coola chieftainship based? Expressed briefly, it depends on the number and value of presents distributed at any kind of ceremonial. To the Bella Coola, every rite, whether it be a marriage, the bestowal of a name, a dance, a type of funeral, or admission into a secret society, is a prerogative intimately associated with the myth by which the performance is authorized. Accordingly, the host is really displaying the glories of his ancestors before the eyes of guests present at the ceremony. To the Bella Coola it is unthinkable for such to be performed without the giving of presents to all; failure to do so would destroy the value of the prerogative. The potlatch is the ceremonial at which the most lavish generosity is displayed, but the principle of the acquisition of prestige by the giving of presents is the same for all other rites; the only difference is that at a potlatch a man is able to display his generosity to a larger number of recipients. In consequence, the aim of every ambitious man is to hold potlatches, since his status in the community virtually rests on his ability in this respect. The ritual of a potlatch will be given in detail in the latter part of this chapter, but its complications will be intelligible only after a description of the

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the writer was in Bella Coola, a non-ceremonial entertainment was given one evening at which several men sang and performed. The writer was asked to sing a Bella Coola song, which he did in the belief that it was not one that was incorporated in the ancestral myth of anyone. Unfortunately, his teacher had erred, and as soon as the song was completed an old woman arose and stated that it belonged to her ancestral family. She avoided the difficulty of its singing by immediately announcing that the singer was her "son." Thus the writer was adopted into a Bella Coola family, a circumstance which aided him considerably in collecting information. This did not alter the fact that a ceremonial song had been sung. Accordingly, the woman gave presents to the guests, thereby legalizing the adoption, and saving herself from the disgrace of having one of her songs used as if it were a matter of no consequence, free to anyone.

123 533 556* 424 [597]

SEATING

Presents are also a means of obtaining seats. Every Bella Coola has at least one name embodied in an ancient myth. A man who wishes to become a chief can do so only by giving lavish presents to make his designation "strong," "firm," or "bright," to use Bella Coola expressions. Such gifts increase the importance of the owner's name, and they obtain for him the right to a seat, more or less definitely located, in the house. Since all Bella Coola habitations are built on similar lines, a man can occupy his wonted position when summoned to a ceremony in any house. The validating of ancestral names and the acquisition of seats are among the important features which occur at potlatches.

554 556* [625] [424] [553]

In the beginning of time, when the first people were sent down to populate the earth, it is assumed that each who established a village, consisting of a single house, seated himself in the best spot within the dwelling, namely the central position behind the fire; his younger relatives ranged either beside him [773]

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554 or sat in two rows, facing one another, on opposite sides of the
*556 central fire, parallel to the side walls of the house. When these
[773] first ancestors died, the name of each was passed on to some
[551] descendant. The Bella Coola feel that he who bears the name
[171] of the first settler in a village should have his ancestor's seat. Comparison with the practices of other coastal tribes suggests that formerly the Bella Coola must have had a definite series of seats in their houses, either according to the rank of the occupant, or according to the rank of the ancestor whose name he bore. The most careful investigation, however, failed to show such a system of ranked seating. The only indications that such may once have been customary, are found in the feeling today that the bearer of the first chief's name ought to occupy the central seat behind the fire, and in the expression, "He seats himself where his ancestor sat," when a youth is given his place in the house.

[551] A seat can be claimed and an ancestral name assumed at any age. Goods must be given away which are said to be "covering" for the young man, to have "flowed away," or to have "become nothing" for the name. These validate the official assumption of the designation. With it is given a place in the house. A seat is chosen at the side of the fire, and the goods mark that spot as his in conjunction with the name.
[424] The seat itself is not material, though the general location on which a person shall sit is indicated. His "seat" is the goods that have been expended. Several men may have positions at practically the same spot, but when all are seated they merely move slightly so that all have room. There is no thought of one person infringing on the location of another. A parent who gives ample wealth at successive potlatches may seek for his son a seat behind the fire. Such is entirely his own affair and if sufficient goods are distributed the son may seat himself in that place, but if the gifts are of little value the occupant is secretly held in derision, as having a seat that is unsound, or unfirm. In later years the man may expend large sums in strengthening his seat; by so doing he wins recognition from

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all that he sits in an enviable spot, irrespective of its location in the house. 554 ● 556 *

In precisely the same manner a man may take for himself a seat in the central part of the row behind the fire, but he is laughed at for endeavouring to assume a dignity, unworthily, unless he can validate his position by lavish presents. The Bella Coola are always ready to make fun of a person who fails to maintain his seat. On the death of the occupant of the central position it is taken for granted that whoever inherits his name will assume that location and give the essential presents, but it is not incumbent upon him to do so. He may choose to establish his new name at his old station, beside, instead of behind, the fire. Thus it has come to pass that the seat of the most important chief of a village is often at the side of the house. When all are seated the chiefs may be widely separated, and a parent may have obtained for his son a seat in a better part of the house than his own. But as a rule the chiefs sit in a row at the back of the fire, the most influential one in the middle. There must have been feuds when two men desired to seat themselves in the central position at the same time, but disputes about this were uncommon, because a man's seat was, and still is, primarily regarded as the intangible goods wherewith he is clothed, rather than his right to sit at any particular spot. It is these non-material coverings that enable a man to be bold and assertive in argument or suggestion, in fact to be a chief. A young man may have had conferred on him one of the noblest names, but his influence depends on the value of the goods expended on his behalf, subject of course to the universal characteristic that a man of forceful character may have more influence than his actual position warrants. [424] [428] [622] [424]

Jealous feuds are common when the man who owns the name of the first chief, first ancestor of a village, has duly validated it, but is being eclipsed in the giving of potlatches by a man whose name is of less intrinsic importance. Such a complication recently arose at Kimsquit, and the Bella Coola [578] [682]

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554 ascribe two murders which took place there in 1915 to jealousy engendered by rivalry.

556 A chief who desires to have his son, or other near relative, succeed to his actual seat may validate for him a position at his feet. If several potlatches be given, with distribution of goods for this purpose, it becomes recognized that the son shall take his father's seat. None the less, he will not have his father's influence or prestige unless he can himself continue to give away goods, because the power of a chief rests on this, not on his ancient name or the location of his seat.

553 556 Further evidence that a man's influence rests less on his actual name than on the wealth distributed with reference to it is found in the lack of uniformity in the type of names validated. Those of highest potential importance are the ones brought to the earth by the first-comers, yet in many cases a man prefers to elevate his position with respect to a name of later origin. It is not uncommon for a man to validate several ancestral designations, and choose one of them to be his most important by valuable gifts for the seat which he occupies with respect to it; or in other cases a name of modern origin is selected and elevated. Thus, a certain Bella Coola chief who is the legal owner of the names *Q̈eil* and *Xemlaix*, two of the first people to settle this earth, has based his greatness on the goods expended for a seat with reference to the name *Siälxeläx*, of more modern origin. It is accordingly clear that any Bella Coola can rise to a position of importance, even though he lacks the right to one of the most ancient names. Moreover, some chiefs prefer to validate several names rather than concentrate on one alone.

622 Furthermore, a powerful chief can create a name. In this case the "power" of the designation rests, not in any supernatural origin, but in the actual wealth distributed. Two examples will serve to illustrate this point. Between 1880 and 1890 a chief was preparing to give a potlatch at which his nephew was to receive a name, when fire destroyed the village with the exception of his house. This added to the value of

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the food and goods distributed, since it was winter and the people were in dire straits on account of the destruction of all their stores. In consequence, the uncle decided to make a new name for his nephew, *Skāmł*, "Charred Wood." By virtue of the goods expended this name became an honourable title, and was maintained by lavish presents. Any similar incident connected with a potlatch can be made the origin of a designation. Another example of a manufactured name is one derived from a peculiarity of the man giving the potlatch. A number of years ago a chief was jeered at by his associates on account of the frequency with which he had to visit the toilet. When next he gave a potlatch he created the name *Ăpstel·a*, "The Toilet One," and gave great dignity to the designation by presents.

Since a seat is valuable only on account of the goods expended in obtaining it with respect to a certain name, it is obvious that names and seats are closely associated. A man who wishes his son to succeed to his own location in the house seats the youth, as has been described, at his feet. It may be a matter of years before he actually takes his father's position, but during that time he is treated with respect; he is still a commoner, but it is recognized that his parent considers him likely to "make good" and become a true chief by ability to give presents. Should he fail to do so, inexorably his influence wanes, in spite of his name and duly validated seat. He keeps the latter, but it is no longer considered one of importance. Thus, too, the course of names from generation to generation is a series of curves; sometimes one is on a pinnacle of glory when "made strong" by a powerful chief, but in the next generation it may fall to the dust through ownership by a weakling. As the Bella Coola express it: It has become hermaphroditized.

A woman is rarely established in a seat, and usually only when a chief has no sons or other near male descendants. In such a case she receives an ancestral name and has the same status as a male chief. At the present time one important

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chief had thus obtained a seat for his daughter, as well as ones for his two sons. But usually a woman continues to use the ancestral name given to her in infancy until she is able to assist her husband in a potlatch, when a name is validated for her (see I, p. 410). The ancestral names of the first women to occupy this earth are reserved for women and, like men's names, vary in prestige according to the prowess of their owners. Most names given to children, though embodied in origin myths, are applicable to either sex; and these are the common designations of women. Cases are known in which a woman has assumed an ancestral name if her brother has allowed it to fall into ill-repute through failure to give potlatches.

With such a fluid system, no fixed line can be drawn between chief and commoner. But after his fourth potlatch a man's influence in the community has become so great that he will usually feel justified in having the carpenters make for him a material seat. There is nothing to prevent a person having one made for him before he has given the requisite number of potlatches, but too rapid assumption may render him liable to the scorn of the community through his failure to show himself sufficiently "strong." The contempt shown to anyone attempting to usurp too lofty a place is a strong deterrent to a proud young man.

On the material seat are carved the man's ancestral crests, in other words the forms in which his first ancestors came to earth, or some of the beings with whom they came in contact. To show these is a matter of pride, but unless the display is fittingly validated, the man's own dignity will be lowered, as well as that of his ancestors. Construction of a seat is particularly common when a man is establishing himself in the central position behind the fire, and claims this to be where his first ancestor sat. Others among the first people may have chosen seats in other parts of the house, and in these, likewise, a man who is taking his ancestral name may have a material seat constructed. Establishment in such a position increases a chief's feeling of mental superiority, as if strength-

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ened by the age-long power of his ancestor. Finally, in old age a powerful chief is careless where he seats himself; his fame is so great that he can afford to disregard all conventions.

POWER OF CHIEFS

It will be seen from the foregoing that chieftainship among the Bella Coola does not depend on hereditary rank, still less on an elective principle, but on the individual's prestige as displayed, especially in his ability to acquire for himself a firm seat by the giving of presents. As he continues to do so his influence becomes ever greater. Consequently, it is impossible to state clearly what are the powers of a chief; such depend upon his prestige and influence. For a Bella Coola chief has no executive or judicial authority; what deference is shown to him depends on his success as a man, a factor which is constantly rising or falling.

The coming of the white man has enabled the Bella Coola to earn comparatively large sums of money by trapping and fishing. This in turn has enabled nearly everyone to give at least one potlatch, a very different state of affairs from that which prevailed in the last century when it required years of toil for a man to amass the necessary food and skins. Consequently, in many towns there were no men who had given potlatches, so that a man's prestige was estimated by the presents he had given at smaller ceremonies. Sometimes, moreover, a man preferred to increase his fame by giving rites of a different nature, such as *kusiut* dances, and the presents then distributed might elevate him in the eyes of the community, to a position above that of a man who had given a potlatch. This, however, was unusual.

After a fourth potlatch a man is accorded a position of eminence, and is termed a *numitl* chief. *Numitl* is an untranslatable word, with the significance of "passage," an allusion to the amount of goods which have passed through his hands. Jealous and vulgar-minded persons pun on the word, applying

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554 it to the digestive tract. After a man has given four potlatches
556 he feels superior to those who have been unable to do likewise.
622 His name is "bright," "clean," "heavy," "firm," or "upright"
[578] in Bella Coola terms, and so, likewise, his seat. He feels independent and proud. Such a chief will fearlessly enter the back-room where ceremonial rites are taking place, even if not entitled to do so.

"He is so strong, he can go where he will," say the Bella Coola.

The advice of such a man is taken because of his ability and prestige, especially by the members of his own family. A few years ago, for example, when a certain Bella Coola died, his brother wished a *kusiut* name-prerogative of the deceased to pass to the dead man's daughter. The girl's mother's father, a *numitl* chief, objected, and his desires were followed, although the name in question was not connected in any way with his family. In small matters, too, people gladly carry out the
[592] wishes of a chief. Work around the house is done for him without thought of disobedience. An old man was asked whether, when he was young, chiefs gave many orders and acted as masters in their households.

"You bet," the old man answered emphatically with a dry chuckle.

231 It is difficult now to form an accurate estimate, from obser-
552 vation, of the influence of chiefs solely through virtue of the
622 goods they have expended. But the following is a concrete example. In November, 1923, the writer, while walking through the Bella Coola village, was bitten by a dog. He was told that the animal belonged to a certain old woman. When next he saw the owner he asked her whether she knew that her dog attacked passers-by.

"Yes," she answered, in a matter-of-fact tone, "He is a chief and can do what he likes."

Further questioning elicited the information that the old
[766] woman and her husband, the childless last survivors of an ancestral family, had transmitted some of their ancestral

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Although guests from different tribes are sometimes invited to other ceremonials, it is at potlatches that they are essential. Since the validity of such transactions as marriages, divorces, or the assumption of professional prerogatives depends on the presence of witnesses, and since the importance of such a rite depends on the number of witnesses, a man is always eager to carry out any public performance at a potlatch when he is sure of the attention of foreigners, and the consequent wider diffusion of knowledge of what he has done. The man who has invited guests is usually willing to allow others to perform at his potlatch, since it increases the complexity and importance of the affair. It follows that no two potlatches are alike; one will contain features entirely lacking in another. Moreover, the wealth of the donor determines how many rites he himself will cause to be performed. The fundamental concept of the potlatch is the inviting of guests from abroad to witness rites in connection with an ancestral myth, especially the return of a recently deceased relative of the donor to visit the living.

At any important potlatch the following rites are carried out, and in the account of the ritual it will be assumed that these alone are taking place. If the reader bears this summary in mind, he is less likely to be confused by the complication of rites.

(1) The return of a dead ancestor to visit the living.

(2) The initiation of young men or women into the *sisaok* society. This includes the validation of a *sisaok* name for each, and a period of seclusion in the back-room. The initiates may either be relatives of the donor of the potlatch, or young persons whose relatives are taking the opportunity to carry out the rite in the presence of foreigners. Some of the initiates may already be members of the society, undergoing a further period of seclusion in order to increase their status by a further distribution of presents.

(3) The payment by the wife of the donor and her family of goods to "rebuy" her from her husband. This is a legal fiction, though necessary to maintain the status of the children.

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(4) The strengthening of the donor's seat.

(5) The strengthening, or initial establishment, of seats for a number of young relatives of the donor who may, or may not, be those who are being initiated into the *nusek* society. Other youths may also be established on seats by their relatives.

The duration of a potlatch varies with the number of rites being performed. The preliminaries, including the beginning of seclusion for *nusek* initiates, requires at least several weeks, in some cases months. There is further delay of a week or more after the arrival of the first guests, as only when the last party has arrived can the actual potlatch begin. This can then be completed in three days and nights, although if many initiates are performing their *nusek* dances, a longer time is required.

What are the consequences of giving a potlatch?

In the first place the donor spreads the fame of his name far and wide, also the myth with which it is incorporated. Thus he increases the renown of his ancestors, a source of intense pride and gratification.

More important even than this, it elevates the donor himself. With the proper carrying out of the complicated ritual and the knowledge that his name is now known among different tribes, a man experiences a feeling of mental superiority which enables him to take a leading part in the affairs of his community. In Bella Coola a chief (*stâhmy*) is a person whose influence is paramount owing to his success in giving potlatches.[9] If several chiefs in one village have given potlatches, he who has given most is generally of greatest importance, although often a man of forceful character who has held, for example, five potlatches will be regarded with greater respect than one of lesser weight, even if he has given six. The whole system is exceedingly fluid, as might be expected where chieftainship depends on individual prowess. In theory, the man who holds the name of the first person to occupy a village, at

[9] Particularly if he has given four potlatches and can accordingly be described as a *numit* chief (I, p. 173). In recent usage the archaic word *stâhmy* is also sometimes employed for "chief."

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the time the earth was settled, ought to be chief of that village. If he has been able to give the necessary potlatches to weight his possession of that name, the fact that he is the legal descendant of the first chief will add a certain amount to his prestige, but unless he has been able to do this his influence will be slight.

Thirdly, potlatches smooth the way for the giver after death. Before the corpse of a chief is removed from the house where he has died, a speaker always announces the number of potlatches he has given and the total value of goods distributed at them. These gifts in a vague way are felt to make easy the deceased's path in the next world as they have done in the present. The feature of the potlatch, though firmly believed by some of the older people, plays a less important part in the life of the Bella Coola than might be expected.

What are the requisites for giving a potlatch?

(1) Possession of an ancient myth, containing a name or names. Probably every Bella Coola has this requirement. A man's family may not be the proud owners of one of the ancestral myths dealing with the first settlement of this earth, but they will at least own some ancient myth which they can elevate by giving a potlatch. As has been said, the owner of one of the most ancient names in many cases chooses to elevate one of lesser antiquity, a course which must, perforce, be done by one who lacks an origin myth. The slight feeling of deference with which those are regarded who hold the names of the first inhabitants of the earth, the mighty chiefs of old, is subordinate to the very real feeling of respect in which is held the successful giver of potlatches. The descendant of one of the first people has the potential right to chieftainship, but unless he can give potlatches he will fail to gain that eminence.

(2) An occasion for giving a potlatch is never lacking. It consists of a number of closely associated rites, any one of which will serve as a reason for the ceremony. The most important feature, the return of a dead ancestor or ancestors to visit the living, is available to anyone at any time. The Bella

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Presently the guests assemble, those who are *nusuk* wearing on their heads one or more weasel skins as a mark of membership in the society. Each takes the seat to which he is entitled, the chiefs behind the fire, or on either side of it, the commoners, slaves, and foreigners in the two corners nearest the door. The heralds move to and fro between door and fire, their constant exchange of remarks adding to the general interest of the affair. It is the function of a herald to lend dignity to chiefs by the tone of his observations, but should one fail to live up to his station, the herald is privileged to comment thereon. In some respects his position approximates that of a buffoon, but as a herald always receives valuable presents, the office is sometimes accepted by ambitious young men, willing to undertake the slightly derogatory duties in return for the substantial gain.

A number of young lads, friends or relatives of X, distribute the food. It is placed in boxes; an important chief is not called upon to share with any one, whereas six or seven men of no standing may partake from one box. These receptacles, with whatever food remains in them, are taken home by the guests; otherwise the host would be insulted. Many boxes are lost in this way, a source of considerable irritation. After the first course, a second follows, consisting of a different kind of food in another box, and in some cases there is a third, and even a fourth course. A chief must never appear stingy. The more he gives, the more does his prestige increase. Also, a man who gives freely receives abundantly, so that generosity brings its reward.

Next, the father or other male relative of X's wife, or a fluent friend who speaks for him, stands up and makes a speech, extolling the fame of his own family by sketching in general outlines one of the myths of his ancestors, and announcing that X's wife is taking to her husband some portion of it. This may be the prerogative of using a spoon carved, for example, with the shape of a beaver; or a carved box, or a totem-pole with certain figures on it, or the right to use a painting of a grizzly bear on the wall of his house, or an ancestral name.

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As the dances proceed, those women who have the prerogative for doing so, utter a peculiar droning cry. After dancing, the initiates return to the back-room, where they doff their attire. The ceremony concludes with the distribution of food.

The initiates are now free to leave their place of concealment, as each has become a legal member of the *nusek* society. Some young men, sons of influential chiefs, are secluded a number of times, others but once. The oftener a youth is secluded, the greater is his prestige, because goods must be distributed on each occasion to validate his name. At the present time, there is considerable uncertainty about the exact details of the ceremony, for it has been so easy of late years to give potlatches that the simpler rite has fallen into disuse; some informants state that each initiate should emerge alone and dance by himself. This concludes the shorter ceremony, but with a potlatch the dancing is reserved until the coming of the foreign guests.

DELIVERING OF INVITATIONS

Returning now to preparations for the true potlatch; it does not matter whether the ceremonies already described are carried out before or after the departure of messengers to invite guests from abroad. Although X usually consults his relatives and friends as to whom he shall invite, this is entirely optional. In giving his invitations X is actuated, first, by a desire to summon those from whom he has previously received hospitality; having accepted presents from them he must discharge the obligations or sink in social estimation. Considerations of friendship also enter into his selection, and he will likewise invite anyone whom he wishes to put to shame by a lavish display of wealth. It is taken as a matter of course that each guest will be accompanied by a number of followers, members of his family, slaves, or adherents.

Acting on X's instructions, a herald invites the people of his village to X's house. X stands up and announces to them

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The first course is dried coho salmon mixed with olachen grease. The fish is first placed in boxes, approximately one to every four persons, though a chief may be honoured by an individual box, and the grease poured over it. As always, any food not consumed is carried away. Failure to do so would be an insult to X. Then round wooden dishes are distributed into which are poured the berries of *Viburnum pauciflorum*. The waiters pour olachen grease over these and the mixture is eaten with wooden spoons. These two foods are invariably the first meal of a potlatch.

If the *siki* of the last guests to arrive has not returned the power given him by the Bella Coola expert, he now stands up and shakes his rattle as a signal that he desires to start his dance. The Bella Coola *siki* also stands up, and the visiting *siki* contorts himself and finally pretends to produce something from his stomach, which he throws across to his colleague. The latter feigns to catch it, cries *haip* loudly several times, and makes the motions of hurling what he has just received into the room at the back of the house where the initiates are concealed. Then he sits down. Meanwhile the last-to-arrive party of guests have started to beat out the tune of one of the *swaok*[13] songs of their own *siki* who dances in time to it. Then another song is beaten out and another member of the party dances, and so on until all have danced who desire to do so. Each wears his own head-dress and each performs in the manner already described. After the dancing, the members of this party of guests give presents to X and other Bella Coola chiefs. There is no fixed ratio between the value of the gifts and the rank of the recipients, though chiefs receive more than lesser men, and X most of all. These presents are *spandjat*, which may be translated as "eagle down-ness," merely a mark of friendship and goodwill. They are not returnable. Goods so received are distributed by X with his other possessions at the potlatch, care being taken not to return them to the donors, which would be insulting.

[13] *Kwalo* songs (I, p. 187) are sometimes used.

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After bestowal of these presents, the *sîki* of the penultimate group of guests shakes his rattle, and exactly the same procedure is carried out by members of his party. They, too, give presents to X and the other Bella Coola chiefs. The same rites are carried out by each party of guests in the reverse order of their arrival. It is frequently near dawn before the first-comers have completed their dances and distribution of gifts. X then gives another meal to all, with no restriction on the choice of food. This concludes the night's ceremony, and the guests depart, except those who are staying in X's house. 556

THE POTLATCH: FIRST DAY

Considering the lengthy ceremonials of the preceding evening, it is not surprising that on this day no one stirs early. The guests receive their breakfast in the houses where they are accommodated, and meanwhile a number of young men gather in X's house to assist in the preparation of food for the main meal of the day. During the previous night a large amount of smoked mountain goat has been put in water to soak. This is now placed in a number of food-boxes, ready for distribution, water is added and hot stones lifted in to bring it to a boil. When the water comes to the boil, mountain goat grease is added, and then bearberries; it is usually about two o'clock in the afternoon before the meal is ready. The guests are summoned and the food given them, the chiefs, as usual, receiving more than those of lower rank. After eating they disperse to await the evening rites. [251] [252] [554]

It was impossible to obtain an accurate account of the ritual carried out on the evening of this, the first day of the potlatch proper. The ceremonial was of less importance than those preceding and following, and it has long fallen into disuse. The guests take up their accustomed places, and the Bella Coola members of the *nusut* range themselves near them and behind the fire. The corners near the door are occupied by non-members of the society. The singers beat out two of [182] 556 575 [535]

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THE PROFESSION OF CARPENTER

As with singers, there are many carpenters who ply their trade without the advantage of an ancestral prerogative. They, also, may be expert and receive credit for their skill, but they can never achieve quite the distinction that comes to a man who has been made a carpenter by the distribution of presents. The latter may be so clumsy with tools that no one would ever trust him to make a canoe, or even a mask; but he is, socially, a carpenter, whereas a skilled artisan lacking a prerogative is admired for his ability but has no foundation of social esteem. In transmitting a professional carpenter's name, however, an effort is always made to give it to a youth with a bent in that direction.

The most esteemed carpenters are those who can make canoes, a trade which requires no special prerogative. In the beginning of time, *Yaaitimut* was the canoe-maker *par excellence;* he assisted many of the first people, and no one can have a professional prerogative as carpenter unless this supernatural being appears in his ancestral myth. The Bella Coola ascribe the skill of the Bella Bella in carpentry to the fact that *Yaaitimut* married a Bella Bella woman in the early period of the world and that many of that tribe are his descendants. In the old days, before the coming of the white men, carpenters were always respected as esteemed members of the community. Chiefs always cared for them, and they received abundant food at every ceremonial. None the less, they were not wealthy, and only in recent years, since the Bella Coola have realized the value put upon good craftsmanship by the white men, has it become customary to give valuable presents to carpenters. Ceremonially, they have considerable influence, since the carpenter who makes a mask usually decides who shall wear it and takes charge of the fitting and adjustment. He is also held responsible for any accident such as its falling when in use or for mechanical defects.

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bundle of four macaroni-shaped shells, probably *Dentalium*, which are said to have been imported from the north in early times. These marks serve to indicate the position of the girl, who is both feared and respected, possessed of supernatural power, and yet baneful. Many Bella Coola stories describe how adolescent girls have been able to vanquish supernatural beings; perhaps the most striking of these is the manner in which they once saved mankind when the sun came too close to the earth. At the end of a year, or eleven months according to one old woman, the seclusion is terminated, and the girl resumes her normal activities. The first time she goes to the river she must throw on the water four pieces of dyed, and four pieces of undyed cedar-bark. This is especially important if the salmon are running at the time, although no explanation of this ritual is given.

The resumption of her freedom indicates that a girl has reached marriageable age. Chiefs sometimes confine their daughters for even longer than a year, and usually delay their marriages for several years to demonstrate their importance; but this is not necessary, nor is it practised by other than wealthy individuals. It is not uncommon for a girl to wed before her year is out; in that case her restrictions automatically lapse. Chiefs never allow such a curtailment for their daughters; to do so would diminish the prestige of the latter, and be detrimental to the status of their children when they marry and have families. Illicit intercourse with a secluded adolescent is considered not only illegal but disgusting as well. Between the period of confinement and marriage, intercourse is prohibited and guarded against by the parents of a girl, but is not considered filthy and seems to have been fairly common in former times with the daughters of poor people and slaves. This sometimes took place before the first menstruation in spite of the disapproval with which this was regarded.

Although the menstrual blood which appears at the first discharge is considered more baneful than that emitted on later occasions, it is always regarded as uncanny or unclean. It is

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855 rebuked. They grow up in the open environment of the
[861] houses, absorbing more of their lore by watching and imitat-
[854] ing than by actual instruction. Their care devolves chiefly on the mother, although at any ceremony the father will be seen arriving with the baby in his arms, while his wife leads another child. Nurses are unknown and the parents take their children with them on all occasions; if it is necessary for a mother to be absent on some arduous toil, her child will be entrusted to a grandmother or other elderly relative. There are no avoidances between the young people and their 606 parents-in-law.

602 The obligation of present-giving does not stop with the
491 marriage ceremony. Whenever X gives a *hasiwi* dance or other ceremony, Y's relatives are expected to contribute. It is felt that the weight of the presents given them during the period of engagement and at the wedding has become too heavy, and they throw this off by lavish giving. No count is kept of the value of gifts bestowed or received, though it is known that the family of the woman loses financially in the end. The father of many daughters is regarded as an unfortunate individual, who is always poor and overworked through the necessity of [554] providing for them. By so doing, however, he increases his own prestige, and the Bella Coola have the happy sentiment that such a man manages to get along some way; perhaps necessity rouses his ambition. Likewise X's relatives contribute to any ritual carried out by Y's father. If, for example, one of his wife's relatives dies, X and his friends may wish to contribute towards the funeral expenses. In fact, any ceremonial serves as an excuse for relatives by marriage to donate [554] goods and thus demonstrate publicly their influence, importance, and generosity.

602 The concept of mutual help between families who have
496 intermarried is one that lasts for generations. In 1922 there was in Bella Coola an old Kimsquit man who had left home some forty years earlier and had since lived in Smith Inlet where he married and had a boy. On the death of his wife, this

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ceremony usually consisted simply of the man and woman living together. In theory, this prevented the children from ever obtaining a name or other prerogative embodied in the ancestral myth of the free-born parent, and an effort was always made to conceal from them the details of the ancestral family's origin myth. But, as already described in the section dealing with slaves, the expenditure of valuable presents served to eradicate, or at least to cover, the blot. If the child succeeded in giving many potlatches, the stain was generally forgotten. On the other hand, if the child of a slave married to a free man was not "washed," he could always be shamed by a reminder of the disgrace of his parents' wedding.

In case of murder, the son or other near relative of the victim sometimes accepts a daughter or other member of the offender's family instead of exacting blood revenge. The bride is delivered to her husband with valuable goods "to wash away the blood," but these never suffice entirely to remove the disgrace from her or her children. The latter may inherit names and prerogatives from their father, but even if they attain to the position of chiefs, they can always be put to shame by reference to their mother's marriage as an atonement for murder. Of course the influence of a great chief makes it impolitic to refer to his ancestry, and there are a few instances of men having reached such a position of eminence that the blot has been practically forgotten. The wife's family must continue to give presents to the husband for years after marriage, otherwise her lot is unenviable indeed, and her children have the status of the unwashed offspring of a slave and a free-man. In some cases a marriage of this type is entered upon years after a murder, if a son or other descendant wishes to end the anxiety of constantly expecting blood revenge.

REPURCHASE OF THE WIFE

Repurchase of a wife is the necessary consequence of every reputable Bella Coola marriage. It is assumed that the pre-

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556 583 [425] prerogatives he is transmitting, Y's father usually takes the opportunity of stating that he wishes to hunt on X's hunting-grounds, or fish in his fishing-grounds. Permission is never refused, though it is only for the period of the potlatch. Since Y's father is to assist X, it is considered fitting to grant him facilities for obtaining pelts and food.

It is on the afternoon of the second day of the potlatch that the goods are delivered. They serve six purposes, which can be described separately, although the Bella Coola usually think of them as being too closely associated for division.

(1) They increase the dignity, influence, and prestige of the donors. This theme needs no further elaboration. When X later gives these presents to his foreign guests, he announces the person from whom he has received them and in this way knowledge of the manner in which Y's relatives have upheld the dignity of the marriage is spread far and wide, to their intense gratification.

(2) They help X to rise to a position of influence in the community by the credit which comes to him from their later distribution. Though a man may acquire goods in various ways, the Bella Coola affirm that without contributions from his wife's relatives no man can become a chief.

(3) They validate the transmission of names, or other prerogatives, taken by Y to her husband. Even presents given [606] directly from father-in-law to son-in-law are always said to have been taken by the daughter to her husband.

(4) Indirectly, they increase the prestige of the children, [554] either born at that time or who may appear later. None of the goods used for repurchasing their mother can actually be used for their benefit, but the whole rite gives them strength to succeed in life. A child whose mother has not been repurchased is said to be unable to walk, as if his legs were powerless; he lacks intelligence, and the ability to prosper. From the [578] petty quarrels of childhood until old age, a person is proud to recall the number of times his mother was rebought, and to thrust this statement in the teeth of those less fortunate.

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(5) They govern Y's status in this world. When women quarrel, as they often do, the most common boast to shame a less wealthy rival is a reminder of the number of times the speaker was repurchased and the value of the goods used. 556 583 [578]

"I can sit down on fifteen canoes," or "I am carried by five slaves," says the angry woman, mentioning whatever goods were used for her repurchase.

(6) Finally, these goods serve a more definite purpose in obtaining for Y a name, or names, of which the value is directly proportionate to the expenditure, precisely as the importance of a chief's designation depends on the goods used to validate it. [553]

As with men's names, some women's appellations were given by *Älquntäm* to the first arrivals; others were created on this earth with regard to peculiar events, and still others are names which can be used either by men or women. Theoretically, the dignity of the first type of name is greater than either of the others, but in practice the importance of the owner depends on the number of times she has bought herself from her husband; the principles governing the rank of women are thus the same as those already described for men. The term *yetsalt*, applied to a woman who has many times rebought herself and so reached a position of eminence, is the feminine equivalent to *stältumx*. The creation of women's names in reference to personal characteristics or incidents connected with their married life is more common than similar creations for men. The ritual of the bestowal of a name on Y, here given, was omitted from the description of the potlatch in order to lessen the complexity of that ceremony. It will be remembered that on the afternoon of the second day of the potlatch Y's relatives appear outside X's house, carrying valuable presents. 551 556 583 [554] [562] 553 556 583

The announcer calls out that Y's father has come to give "food" to X and his relatives. By food, presents are meant, which are the return, with interest, of the gifts given by X's relatives on various occasions. The giver is announced, for other relatives than Y's father contribute, and to whom the

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588 it, although it is customary for the parents of a wife to exhibit
556 their wealth on several occasions.

What are the advantages of such an agreement to the two parties? The husband receives considerable assistance, both in actual goods and in ceremonial prerogatives. Moreover, his vanity is gratified by the desire shown by others to have him as husband of their daughters. The advantages to the wife are more difficult to describe. Financially, her relatives always lose, yet they consider that the prestige gained by their daughter as wife of a mighty chief fully compensates for their monetary loss. Accordingly, they take pains to have a daughter married several times before puberty, either simultaneously or
[595] in succession. Thus there is a form of ceremonial polyandry *existing in Bella Coola at the present day. No ceremonial* marriage takes place after puberty. In later years, when the
[554] wife grows up, marries, and has children of her own, their status is increased materially by the pre-puberty marriages of their mother. They address her fictitious husband as "father," and his children as brother or sister, although there are no incest prohibitions with regard to them. A chief sometimes arranges the bestowal of names or other prerogatives on the children of a fictitious ex-wife, but such favours are too uncertain to provide a motive for the prevalence of the rite. Its value rests on the esteem attached to a woman whose relatives have shown their wealth and prowess by marrying her several times. When her children quarrel with their playfellows, it is common to hear one boast:

"*I* have three fathers. How many have you?"

[558] Occasionally the relatives of a fictitious bride are unable to provide the goods to repurchase her from her husband and the girl remains disgraced for life. In no circumstances has her husband any claims to marital rights with her, and in due course she can marry someone else; but it is never forgotten that she was not rebought from her husband. In 1916 a girl about four years of age was married to a man of sixty, who at the time gave her relatives $80 and a motor boat. She had

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body became eagle down and was wafted upwards is psychologically of the type which might serve as basis for a rite of this kind. If the descendants of the person to whom this had happened had dramatized the incident at subsequent deaths, a custom analogous to the one here described would have arisen.

DISPOSAL OF THE BODY

There is no fixed time for the disposal of a corpse. When possible, it takes place on the day following death, but as many as four days may elapse if delay is necessary for the performance of the rite just described. Another reason for postponement is the absence of near relatives; if they can be summoned within four or five days, the funeral may be delayed until their arrival. There is always endless discussion concerning the exact details; all relatives and members of the ancestral family take part, though the wishes of a son, brother, or other near kinsman are usually followed. In this, as in so many points of Bella Coola ritual, an influential chief often overrules the desires even of those who are more closely related to the deceased.

Heralds announce the hour chosen,[6] usually about noon, and the people begin to assemble in the deceased's house, even strangers being welcome. Women wail dolorously, and another indication of the occasion is the bundles containing clothing, cooking utensils, and other articles belonging to the dead person. The lid of the coffin has been left open, but when everything is ready, an elderly man is asked to strike it, once, with a stone; then the lid is closed. Planks have been removed and a hole made in one of the front corners of the house, through which the man throws out the stone. The women redouble their lamentations as an old woman, previously asked to do so, lights a bundle of dyed and undyed cedar-bark and climbs through the opening carrying this. No request has been made for pall-bearers, but any strong men, especially

[6] This is done at present, even after the carrying away of the "body." In former times it was omitted when the corpse was secretly buried by the *nusak*.

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CHAPTER IX

RELATIONS WITH THE SUPERNATURAL

Introductory—Sterile Apparitions—Supernatural Aid Granted to the Unfortunate—Supernatural Good Luck—Shamanism—Direct Revelations from the Supreme God—Power Localized in Certain Spots—Dreams

INTRODUCTORY

THE aspects of Bella Coola life thus far described have been principally of a nature which might be experienced by any member of the community. On the other hand, contact with supernatural beings is a privilege granted to individuals without respect to rank; even nobour appeal cannot assure it. The few to whom signal favours are granted acquire a position of importance totally different from that of chiefs. The Bella Coola are firmly convinced that supernatural beings abound in the mountains and forests of British Columbia, and that every activity of human life is governed by them. Not only do these creatures include monsters of the imagination, but birds, animals, and fish; even the activities of the human mind are considered to be beyond the scope of normal life. Ancient stories describing the actions of strange creatures and conversations between man and animals are accepted as truthful accounts, so that it seems obvious to the Bella Coola that his ancestors were more powerful than he is today. Never considering the possibility of errors in his stories, he accepts the alternative hypothesis that mankind has sadly degenerated from the golden age. Nevertheless, he assumes that the beings have not altered, and consequently hopes to encounter them on every occasion. Moreover, this firm background of belief makes it easy for him to recognize supernatural influence in events which a white man would consider to be natural. It is impossible to over-emphasize this concept.

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755 to the part affected. In such a case the object, a toad for
* 756 example, becomes visible at the end of the staff. Conjuring is employed to do this, and often a tuft of dyed cedar-bark is used, which makes the deception still easier. Shamans are very expert in such matters. It is said that when two rival shamans once disputed about their prowess, one of them cast his stick on the ground and it became a snake, whereupon the other did likewise; and his became a toad which hopped after the snake. The Bella Coola find biblical parallels for such [177] revelations of power in the transformation of Aaron's rod, and the appearance of fire on Mount Carmel.

Shamanistic Ceremonies

● 554 In addition to his professional abilities, a shaman has also
* 756 certain social prerogatives. As has been mentioned, many
787 shamans lack the power to cure, but they may have seen some feat during a dream, or during a visitation from *Tlitcäplilän·a*. It enhances a man's social prestige if he can graphically display whatever he has observed. It follows that the rites about to be described are often, perhaps usually, performed by a person unable to cure the sick, but it must be remembered that to the Bella Coola there is no social difference between a shaman who can cure with the aid of a basin, and one who lacks this power. Each has merely received a different gift from his supernatural benefactor. There seems little doubt that a man of imagina-
* 756 tive temperament frequently invents a feat of this type, or
787 rather that he ponders over one until he either dreams of it, or imagines himself to have done so. Certainly, after he has performed such a rite, he deludes himself into believing that he has had supernatural authorization for it. Conjuring feats performed long ago by shamans, feats practised by the members of other tribes, personal inventions, either actually or theoretically dreamed of, all these are among the sources from which shamanistic dances are derived. It follows that almost
* 756 anyone who has the necessary skill is able to perform, provided
556 that he has sufficient food to validate the ceremony. Thus this

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754 members, and delegated the task to a man who was known to be skilled in such matters. The latter stole some shreds of the offender's clothing, placed them in a human skull which he fastened to a long rope and threw into a swift stretch of the river. As the rapids tossed the skull to and fro, the person whose clothing was within began to feel uneasy; first he experienced a jumping pain in his head, but as the wild movements continued, he became light-headed and finally delirious. At this juncture, it was decided to pull back the skull, but the rope broke and it was carried away downstream. Nothing could save the man and he died within a few hours. This particular incident occurred among the Bella Bella, but it is agreed that it might have happened in Bella Coola.

[554] The mingled fear of, and aversion to, a person who knows some such secret method of killing, fades into insignificance compared to the extreme loathing of every Bella Coola for sorcerers. Their methods of killing may be similar to the ones just described, but they are evil creatures who practise secretly, working entirely to gratify their own personal desires. Not [683] only is the murder of a sorcerer a virtuous act, but the relatives of one should be put to death without mercy. There is no single factor which has caused so much hatred, bitterness, and suspicion as belief in the activities of sorcerers. Conversion to [797] Christianity has scarcely altered it, and men who have been members of the church for ten to twenty years remain fully convinced that some of their associates have loathsome abilities as sorcerers. In many parts of the world, belief in black magic and witchcraft is one of the last native convictions to pass away, and it seems probable that this will be the case in Bella Coola although, of course, it will become increasingly difficult to obtain information about the subject.

The actual methods used by different sorcerers vary, although most of them require an article which has been in contact with their intended victim. Consequently, they seek pieces of soiled clothing, nail parings, hair clippings, spittle, and other objects of the same type which are usually concealed

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is spoken of in the Chinook jargon as a *mesatche box*, that is, a "dirty," "unclean," or "repulsive" box, and this term is one which is mentioned whenever an unexpected death takes place, or whenever a coastal Indian is accused of loitering around a deserted camp or of stealing into another's house. The belief is not limited to the Bella Coola, but has formed the basis for criminal cases all over the coast of British Columbia. It is difficult to find words sufficiently strong to express the disgust, loathing, and fear with which the Bella Coola regard a person suspected of sorcery.

Ability in this respect carries with it certain prohibitions. A sorcerer would lose his power if he should wash or blow his nose except when about to commit murder. The one old Bella Coola now thought to be a sorcerer never washes; he knows that if he did so, he would be immediately accused of plotting someone's death. This man is greatly feared, as he is said to have a collection of spittle from every member of the tribe; efforts have been made to break into his house and steal this, but it has never been found. He takes credit for the death of at least one white man in the valley. A peculiar impediment suffered by all sorcerers is a prohibition against turning around, although no one knows why doing so should deprive them of their strength. The explanation may be that their power would recoil upon themselves, a concept well illustrated by the following incident:

When the first Christian Bella Coola left the old village to settle near the mission station, they were regarded with dislike and suspicion by their fellow-tribesmen. One day, one of them happened to follow a path through the woods which led her to a rude shelter in which was a bundle. Hastily summoning her fellows, they opened it and found an article of clothing belonging to each Christian. The man who told this incident described his fear at finding a dirty shirt of his own among the others. They felt that the garments had been collected by a young man who claimed to be a shaman, but whom they suspected to be merely the accomplice of a sorcerer, and this was soon proved to be the case. He was insufficiently trained; instead of touching the patient's body with his stick, he used to suck wherever the pain was located and then

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tense throughout this chapter, and to assume the presence of a number of young men and women ignorant of the significance of the rites. Formerly, the *kukusiut* often had difficulty in impressing the uninitiated with their prowess, and feuds with the *a'alk* were common.

Although membership in the *kusiut* society depends on an ancestral prerogative, it is essentially a democratic institution. A certain amount of wealth is necessary to validate a *kusiut* prerogative, but nothing comparable to that required for a potlatch; in fact, poor men are often persons of great importance within the ranks of the society. Nor are the prerogatives considered to be as valuable as ancestral rights, so that slaves are often admitted as *kukusiut* by their masters. An important *kusiut* is not esteemed by the community in the same way as the donor of many potlatches; in short, membership in the society brings limited ceremonial and semi-religious advantage, not social prestige of a public nature.

Powers and Functions of the Society

Any secret society can be viewed from the standpoints of a member, and of a non-member. The scope of the *kusiut* organization can be most clearly outlined by describing first what an uninitiated person knows about it. From his infancy, parents impress upon a child the supernatural powers of the *kukusiut* and the dangers attached to their rites. Such instruction is perhaps strongest where one, or both, is not a member. They then voice their own fears, and do not merely deceive for the good of the society. Steeped as every child is in a firm belief of the near presence of the supernatural, he readily believes what he is told. He learns, for example, that if, without special invitation, he dares enter the house where a *kusiut* dance is taking place—at any time during the four days or more that it lasts—his spirit will be drawn from him. This is sufficient to deter him from prying too closely into the rites. Strangely enough, there seem always to have been differences in teaching with respect to this deception. It is believed that if a non-

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*575 796 424 more difficult dramatic rites in which failure would lead to the uninitiated learning the mysteries of the society, the matter is debated at length. The writer was present at one meeting held for this purpose, with regard to a performance which had not been carried out for over thirty years. An air of solemnity was evident throughout, as if each present realized the gravity of the topic. The prospective dancer explained what he wished to do, then anyone was at liberty to comment, and most of those present took advantage of it, the marshals speaking last of all. The influence of each speaker depended in part on the [554] type of *kusiut* dance which he himself had given, and in part on his general status in the community as chief or otherwise, an intangible position dependent on public estimation rather than upon functional rights. In this case, after considerable discussion, it was decided that the dancer could proceed with his arrangements. But if there should be any doubt as to the would-be performer's ability, the marshals have no hesitation in prohibiting his intended rite, and they often do so later if rehearsals show that it is unlikely to be successful.

Refusal of permission to perform occurs only in case of the more difficult dances, which include the Cannibal, Scratch, Breaker, Fungus and *Kusiotem*. Members of the society whose prerogatives are for one of these types are considered as having greater importance than those who can merely sing of some minor deity-patron; yet all are equally members of the *kusiut* society, which is not graded according to the performances of its members.

*575 796 Many of the more difficult dances require weeks of preparation, when it is sometimes said that the dancer has disappeared to the land above. When he returns they usually conclude in four nights, the time taken by those of a simpler [104] type. Each of these nights[1] is known by an untranslatable term, and, as it will be necessary to use these throughout, it may assist the reader to summarize the ritual which takes place on each. It can be assumed that it is a simple dance, that is, one without elaborate preliminaries.

[1] [i.e. of a Kusiut dance - ANALYST]

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[The Cannibal Dance]

forth, followed by a number of *kukusiut* who remain constantly in attendance on him. 575* 796*

X enters the lowest house and sits down near the door, too heavy, with the weight of the crystals, to proceed further. He growls persistently, while the *kukusiut* women present drone monotonously, and those who have accompanied him utter their cry of *hoip*. These measures at last persuade the Cannibal to move, but only to the next house, where the same procedure is repeated, and so for each in the village. The uninitiated peer curiously and fearfully from their bedrooms, but would never dream of joining in the cry of *hoip*. If X should be asleep or otherwise engaged when the voices are heard, some of his assistants awaken him and send him forth. The arrival of strangers also excites X. One of his followers tells him of their coming and when a canoe reaches the river, he runs down into the water and bites as many of the newcomers as he desires. The herald, watching the approach of the strangers and knowing what will happen, cries out to the uninitiated to conceal themselves prior to X's appearance. The guests proceed to the dwelling of their host, but that evening the Cannibal's father, or whoever acts for him, calls them to his house where he gives them presents to validate the biting. If foreigners have been expected, gifts are always saved for them from the previous distribution. The value of the present depends in part on the rank of the recipient, but more upon the feeling of like or dislike with which X's father regards him. A chief naturally receives more than a person of lower rank, although these donations are not returned. 575* 796* 431 [609] [554]

On the morning of the fifth day of X's retirement, some of the *kukusiut* collect chamber-pots and towards noon he is immersed in the river in the manner previously described. Then he goes through the village four times, on each round visiting every house. The uninitiated are told that the washing has caused his call to depart, and the whistle is heard no more.[a] 575* 796*

Towards dusk all the *kukusiut* assemble in X's house. He

[a] The dismissal of the call at this time may not be the correct procedure.

[The Scratch Dance]

* 575 They do not blacken their faces on receipt of a call as do
424 most *kukusiut*.

[302] The theme of their songs is of the land above, instead solely
787 of their patrons.

[533] On visiting a house where a *qulem* or *sukuam* is taking place they sit with the Cannibals in one of the back corners; this group is given food before any of the other guests.

They do not exercise their prerogative on fellow-Scratchers, Cannibals, or Breakers.

[787] They are liable to frenzy both when the call is upon them and after its departure. In such cases they run forth, apparently guarded and restrained by other *kukusiut*, and rush into every house to frighten the uninitiated.

They must recompense those whom they have scratched.

[578] They act as peace-makers among the *kukusiut*, since the necessity of accompanying a Scratcher who pretends to be frenzied overrules all petty causes of strife.

[554] Though any definite concept of graded rank in the *kusiut* society is quite foreign to the Bella Coola, it is generally felt that Scratchers and Breakers are only slightly less important than Cannibals. The patron of every Scratcher is *Sno'elxulis Alquntām*, one of the sons of *Alquntām*; this supernatural being scratches the supernatural ones in the land above, and his father alone can restrain him. The prerogative is fairly common, and it is probable that in early days there was at least one Scratcher in every village.

[776]

* 575 The following account of the ritual was obtained from one
* 796 of the Bella Coola marshals and describes the manner in which the dance should have been performed by the Scratcher,
[424] *Alushnaix*, his daughter's daughter's son, who had recently obtained the prerogative formerly possessed by his deceased mother's father. It will be convenient to refer to *Alushnaix* as X and use the present tense in recording the proper ritual, though it was largely omitted on the last occasion the dance was given.

X arranges a suitable day with the marshals for receiving

1/2 [i.e. - the Scratchers - ANALYST]

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[The Scratch Dance]

obey one prohibition; he must not sleep with his wife for four days.

Like a Cannibal, X is liable to frenzy for the rest of the ceremonial season. During this period he remains secluded within his house, and the uninitiated willingly avoid him, believing him to be mentally deranged. He attends every *kusiut* dance, where his latest madness helps to frighten the uninitiated. If strangers from Kimsquit or *Tal'io* visit Bella Coola, he at once becomes frenzied, rushes to the beach and scratches them, precisely as a Cannibal would do; in this case he must be pacified in the same manner. A Scratcher always owns goods to recompense scratched foreigners. If it is the first time that X has danced, he must remain secluded for the following summer, and give his ceremony the next winter. During the warm months he remains within the back room of his house, and though some of the uninitiated know of his presence, still believing him mad they do not intrude upon his privacy. The coming of foreigners during this period excites him to frenzy and he scratches them, irrespective of the time of year.

It might be mentioned that some Scratcher names are indicative of the dancer's function, and others, such as "The Cause of Fear," have reference to his prowess.

THE BREAKER DANCE

When a Bella Coola speaks of the fear which *kusiut* dances cause the uninitiated, he almost invariably cites in order the Cannibal, Scratch, and Breaker dances. *Kukusiut* with these three prerogatives have no more privileges than other members of the society, nor are they considered superior in rank; but similarity in their functions leads to an almost automatic association. If questioned further, a Bella Coola will usually say that he regards the Cannibal dance to be first, with the Scratch and Breaker equal, but less important. Breakers share with Cannibals and Scratchers the prerogatives of not blackening their faces; of having as theme for their songs the land

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[The Breaker Dance]

feats. X is one of the few *ʟ̣ɛ̀ɬaxiɬ* having the prerogative of using supernatural singers. The evening's ceremony concludes in the usual fashion.

Until the departure of his call, X is liable to fits of frenzy so that on both *qaɬɛm* and *nɛ̀ɬaxam* he often visits every house and breaks utensils, though his guardians appear to be making every effort to restrain him. Breakers, irrespective of their exact prerogative, are enabled to act in any unusual manner they desire, and strive to excel in peculiar behaviour. A favourite trick is to smear themselves with excrement, either real or imitation. It is difficult to over-estimate the enormous prestige which such actions call forth in the eyes of the uninitiated, to whom it appears that the coming of a call entirely alters the mentality of the recipient, a belief which the *ʟ̣ɛ̀ɬaxiɬ* make every effort to maintain. Nothing further need be said of either *qaɬɛm* or the preliminaries of *nɛ̀ɬaxam*, both of which follow the usual pattern.

When the uninitiated are admitted to X's house on *nɛ̀ɬaxam* evening, they are filled with wonder at the sight of the masked singers, of *Xwaɬiyuwaɬɛ Ałyaxtɛ̀n*, and of the four supernatural Breakers who move wildly to and fro as the songs are sung, as if only the eagle down which the *ʟ̣ɛ̀ɬaxiɬ* blow upon them restrains them from destroying property. The fluent *Awɛ̀ɬkwałɛxɛ* makes the most of her opportunity to describe the wonders which are before their eyes. Then the uninitiated are told that it will be safer for them to withdraw, and hurry out. Presently they are startled to hear the sound of people moving, and the four supernatural Breakers, followed by all the *ʟ̣ɛ̀ɬaxiɬ*, leave the house and proceed to the lowest one in the village. Around the fire go the masked four, picking up stones and hurling them at any destructible property. Most houses contain a number of stones which have been used in boiling liquids, so that there is no lack of missiles. *ʟ̣ɛ̀ɬaxiɬ* who are wise take care to hide or remove valuable property before this inroad begins, since the wearers of the masks take advantage of the opportunity to destroy the goods of those

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

126 195 533 text, although they are obvious on the phonograph records. In singing, moreover, sounds, especially vowel sounds, are altered to fit the tune, a factor which accounts for further discrepancies between record and text. A frequent device is reduplication, a word or group of words is repeated in singing when not called for in the spoken version. Finally one sound occurs in singing which is practically unknown in speaking, a velar *s* (recorded as *ȿ*) which gives a whistling effect. Most choruses and some whole songs consist of meaningless sounds; in such cases the tune alone is important and no attempt was made to record the syllables.

It was quite as difficult to obtain interpretations as to record texts. Songs which have been handed down for generations abound in archaic expressions which are meaningless even to the older men; some recently composed are full of metaphorical devices to conceal their real significance from the uninitiated. The result is consequently a series of words which, taken one at a time, convey no meaning. In many cases it was impossible to obtain literal translations, even with the willing assistance of younger men familiar with English. Every effort was made to get the general *meaning*, and it is felt that this object was tolerably achieved, though the transcriptions may not be sufficiently accurate for grammatical analysis.

533 796 575 554 424 555 Singers function at every ceremony; in fact, its success depends so largely upon their efforts that they are always important members of the community. Some singers are created by the validation of an ancestral prerogative; others by having composed a suitable tune. The young man who has done so, calls one of the established musicians aside and hums it to him; if the hearer is favourably impressed, he may learn and repeat it to his fellows, and if it wins their approval, the composer may be asked to join their ranks for the occasion on which it is to be used. Thus encouraged, the young man is likely to try again, or he may be invited to assist at some ceremony for which a large number of singers is required. If proficient, he is certain to win recognition in course of time,

2:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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uxs-mamalxmxinuxu	*xi xmxlilmuxuxdjx*	*xmxs tlxqilqumxl*	599*
you are the prey of misfortune,	you unmarried mother;	you are spirit(d), you women	586
xmxl'hlyx yu-lxmxl	*Ăxstxs*	*Yumtxain*	*xmmxain*	578
who pretend to be virtuous(e).	Alas(f)!	I am ashamed.	I am *Sxm*(g).	

[WOODLESS CONDOR]

B Lxmxmxmlxs xlxtxlxlxs	*dzxkxlxlxtxlxsxlxlxs*	*yxs xlxlxtxxlxxl-u-*
Exactly similar	is the little boy's name	to that of the round-headed
xlyxsyxqxlxsxlxlxl	*Ăxstxs*	*Yumtxain*	*xmmxain*
Kxlxsti(h).	Alas!	I am ashamed,	I am *Sxm*.

[WOODLESS CONDOR]

C The third part, if it ever existed, has been forgotten.

(*a*) This differs from most *Ikxiyxkum* songs in that *Sxm* was an unmarried mother, not a faithless wife. She was held up to scorn by the men of Kimsquit and this song composed for her by a certain *Xlx-qumx*. [848]

(*b*) Recorded as song VII D 38a, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard.

(*c*) It is said that women, even of slave blood, used to endeavour to increase their importance in the eyes of their children by lamenting, falsely, of ancestral history. [554]

(*d*) A term of opprobrium, difficult to translate. It is said to imply slave ancestry, but is more probably a mere epithet, referring to the female organ. [195]

(*e*) This is addressed to women in general.

(*f*) An expression of pain or sorrow, used under all circumstances. [192]

(*g*) The theme is here changed as if it were *Sxm* herself speaking. This is a common device in all kinds of songs.

(*h*) *Kxlxsti* was supposed to be the father of *Sxm*'s child.

Mourning Songs

Mourning songs excel all other Bella Coola compositions in length, complexity, and wealth of detail. Especially those composed for mighty chiefs contain numerous references to the ancestral history of the deceased and mention incidents referred to in origin myths, a source of pride to the survivors and of envy to those who listen. 599* [765] [766]

Song Used for Kxsi when Mourning his Son, Kxtsxa(a)

A Xlxmxlxsx	*wxnxlkxlxdxsxmxs*	*lxlxlxmxqxsxs*	*xtxnxlxxlxpxi* ;
Why has my son done so(*b*)?	Come, ye who are residents of foreign lands(*c*)		

B: McIlwraith E-3 (1922-1924) 1968
NES Bellacoola NES
Tsimshian NE/S

B 721 [554] B [703] these accounts seemed to be exaggerations, and the casualties were probably few. The Bella Coola did not have the same admiration for the successful warrior as for the man who gave many potlatches, while everything indicates that their raids were on a small scale, rendered singularly ineffective by lack of discipline.

B 72 128 539 SPECIFIC ACCOUNTS

Active warfare has been so long discontinued on the coast that none of the living Bella Coola can describe conditions as they existed during hostilities. It was possible to collect the following accounts of raids and adventures which, though individually of small value, illustrate tactics and strategy, and recount incidents which throw light on the frame of mind of the participants.

B T 448 721 KITKATLA WAR

For many years there was animosity between the Bella Coola and the Kitkatla who, with the advantage of strong government, used to sweep down from the north for salmon and slaves. Bella Coola itself was comparatively immune from attack, but the Kimsquit people suffered severely. The attackers were not always successful; one old man related how, when his mother's mother was an infant, they were driven off with the loss of four canoes and many men. The fact that this incident had been remembered for so many years indicates that it was unusual.

B T 527 434 [727] Slaves captured in this way were traded from tribe to tribe and rarely escaped. When an elderly Bella Coola was a lad, there was considerable excitement in the community owing to the return of *Hakwaala*, a woman who had been carried off when a girl. She had been traded to a northern tribe among whom, she said, it was customary to crush captives beneath totem-poles and house-posts. Her diligence saved her from this fate, and she was passed on until she reached the far north, on the

Ethnology B-5 (1922-1924) 1968
NEB Bellacoola NEB
Tsimshian NEB

Tsilaxa remained encamped for several days, during which time he sent word to the Bella Coola that he regretted the death of *Qelemalut* and had come to make peace. He added that his followers had tried to dissuade him, saying that he would be killed, but he had answered that he was too great a man to allow fear to influence his actions.

Having waited for several days, the party came up the Bella Coola River, their canoe loaded with presents and eagle down, while *Tsilaxa*'s brother, *Nu'ulx-s*, were the mask of his ancestors as further proof of friendly intentions. It was unusual to display one except in a ceremonial, but this was an unprecedented event; to know that he might soon be killed and he preferred to die while bearing the obvious mark of incorporation with some incident of an ancestral myth. The canoe was beached opposite the house of *Tsilaxa* where the crew blew eagle down into the air to mark their peaceful mission. Men had gathered from all parts of the Bella Coola valley and several hot-heads wished to disregard the safe-conducts and slay their enemies, a course which they had recommended for several days and had tried to precipitate by open acts against the Kitlaxla. *Tsilaxa* himself had not spoken, but he now appeared and advised the people not to harm *Tsilaxa*, since continuing hostility would result. Though his wishes did not entirely quiet the angry ones, they outwardly assured the Kitlaxla of a welcome. *Tsilaxa* brought forward a moose-skin, and told some of his people to hold it spread as they, when *Tsilaxa* kept from his canoe, he would land upon it, and could be carried to the house without putting foot to the ground. *Tsilaxa* answered proudly that there was nothing on earth strong enough to support him, since his many protectors had made him incomparably heavy. None the less, he accepted the honour, as assurance to landing shown only to mighty chiefs, and was carried into the house where he was seated in the far right-hand corner, an honourable location. *Tsilaxa* invited all the people in the vicinity, above as well as Bella Coola, and the inner partitions of the house had to be removed to provide space for the dining.

Though *Tsilaxa* had decided against the immediate killing of the Kitlaxla, he had concocted a scheme to test their bravery and the sincerity of their desire for peace. No one knew of this except his nephew, *Ne'emekut*, who was to carry it out. When all were seated, the latter appeared, his face smeared with ashes, and his hair tied up in a cap-form with sword skins as is customary during war. *Ne'emekut* moved nervously around the house, brandishing a weapon and repeatedly pointing it at *Tsilaxa* in a threatening manner. If the Kitlaxla had shown nervousness, particularly if one of them had hit his own weapon, a massacre would have resulted. But they remained unmoved, confident in the prestige of their leader, while he knew that though his body might be

2:56:Howitt K-9 (1912-1924) 1948
NEA Bellacoola NEA

in former times. *Skiu* might almost be called the Bella Coola national game, although it is now (1913) seldom played. 526 [172]

A game with somewhat similar rules is *squelaist*, played with small wooden spears tipped with bone. When a number of men or boys decide to play, they choose two captains who in turn select their teams; any number can take part, provided that the sides are equal, but five each is usual. There is a special name for each player according to his position, and he bets against the corresponding member of the other team. A mark is set up, and one of the captains throws his spear, so that it will stick upright in the ground as near the target as possible. The rival leader endeavours to beat this, and if he fails, his second man throws, and each in succession until one comes closer to the goal than the rival captain. Then the latter's number two tries to beat the last thrower, followed by those on his own side until one succeeds or till all have thrown. The game then ends when all of one side have thrown unsuccessfully. The winning side is, of course, the one to which belongs the player whose throw is nearest the target. Each member of the losing team pays his wager to his adversary and a second round is begun. 526 525

The sport is now rarely indulged in, but in former times games used to continue all day, and valuables were lost in the gambling which was considered to be a necessary part of it. Men used to observe ceremonial chastity to increase their chances of success and the expert was regarded with admiration by younger lads. The crack team of a village often used to visit other towns to compete against their representatives, and the games were contested amid frenzied excitement on the part of the supporters. This occasionally led to serious fighting. [785] [354] [428] [578]

Another sport of a similar type is archery; a mark is set up and each competitor tries to lodge his arrow as close to it as possible. This game has now entirely lost favour, the young men preferring a type of football played without strict attention to rules, but with great energy. 526

Bella Coola children, too, have their games and recreations, many of them of an imitative nature. Little boys enjoy nothing 557

J:McDougall E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NEA Bellacoola NEA

APPENDIX D

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alpin: Something long sought for on account of its especial desirability, such as well-grained wood.

alpin nax nemx: Child whose parents were long engaged and who is accordingly regarded as being well prepared for. [554]

Alpkaiz: Kamsk imitate concealed within the back room.

Amaxalk: One of the four men to settle in Kimsquit in the beginning of time.

Apa: Grease or a polytrich.

Apaxaxlam, "The Shelters": Name assumed by Awaxa in the beginning of time.

apkaaxlaz, "What Has Been Shaken Off": Term applied to presents distributed when a corpse has been carried through the roof. The implication is that they are dust shaken from the fingers of the deceased. [431] [764]

Apaxtaw: 1—The supreme god.
2—One of the four men to settle on the upper Bella Coola in the beginning of time.
3—One of the four men to settle on the upper Kimsquit in the beginning of time.
4—Tail of a dance repository.

Apaxtawaxlaz: 1—Mountain on the north side of the lower Bella Coola.
2—Name assumed by one of the four settlers at Ocakdi in the beginning of time.

Apaxtlaxtlaxly: Old people, especially parents; this is a polite term for direct address. [601]

Apaxtlaxtlak: Supernatural artizans who made mankind in the beginning of time. [576]

apa'ik: Presents given to validate the initiation of a taxlat. [231]

Apaxtlaxt: Ancestral name of a Bella Coola woman. [763]

Apaxwaxtaxwaxtay: Professional mourners.

Apaxwayaxtak: Professional dancer or marriages.

Apaxyaxwa: Professional hunter.

apaxyalk: Professional warrior.

Apaxlaz: Kimsquit fishermen living in the last century.

apa'ax: Clothes rack.

Apaxp: Cannibal hunter mentioned in an ancient story.

apkit ni'a gwaiken: Second eldest sibling. [601]

Apkmax: Repository of a Kimsquit Canoklad where canoes are effected.

Apkmaxalk: Professional warrior. [463]

apkmaxalmin: Professional river guard.

Apkmaxgamax: Mountain west south of the Kimsquit River.

apkmalz: Shamen.

Apkmalzmimx: 1—Meeting of those who have given potlatches. [753]
2—Unidentified dances said to attack only chiefs.

apkmax: Marriage ceremony, i.e. those who, not being relatives, wish to associate themselves with the bride's family in the financial transactions of a marriage.

Apaxkmaxmax: Name applied to the supernatural artizans with reference to their construction of everything used by mankind.

Apaxkmaxum, "Chief-Creator": Name applied to the supernatural being Hailiyaxa with reference to his frequent invisibility.

Apaxkmaxum, "The Highest of All Chiefs' Seats": Name of Awaxa's son in the beginning of time.

Apa'kmx, "Falling Star-Fish": Name assumed by a Kimsquit man long ago.

Apaxpx, "The Reef-Makers": Name acquired by a Kimsquit man long ago.

apaxlz: One who has acquired a commission for carpentry work in preparation for a potlatch. [465]

J. McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

[765] [illegible]: 1—Memorial potlatch.
2—Mourning song.
3—The wailing of mourners at a grave.

[763] [illegible]: "The Weeper": Female supernatural being whose appearance indicates the death of a chief.

[illegible]: Professional *kusiut* prerogative consisting of the right to sing of *Sisiutl* during *kusiutem* dances.

[illegible]: Name.

[illegible]: *Kusiut* cane of a Bella Coola woman.

[illegible]: Whitewater River, the southern fork of the Bella Coola.

[illegible]: Long grass suitable for pasturage.

[illegible]: Smoked spring salmon with the bone removed.

[illegible]: Moon, *infra*.

[554] [illegible]: "The One with Many Descendants": Term used to describe an elderly man with many children and grandchildren.

[illegible]: Man mentioned in an ancient story.

[601] [illegible]: Game, resembling a tug-of-war, played with wooden loops and spears.

[illegible], [illegible], *tlintsetsais*: Grandchild; the vocative indicates endearment.

[978] [illegible]: The deposition of eagle down on the heads of those quarrelling to pacify them.

[illegible]: Gull blubber.

[illegible]: 1—Breathing.
2—Sound of a *nusuk* whistle, referred to as the breathing of *Mitlakila*.

[illegible]: Chuckar grouse.

[illegible]: 1—Ancient village in the upper Bella Coola valley.
2—Place of petrified power at site of ancient village.
[778] 3—Semi-anthropomorphized being responsible for power in this locality.

[illegible]: Supernatural being resident at the mouth of every river.

[illegible]: The vote.

[824] [illegible]: Dwarf elderberries.

[illegible]: 1—Human-like power, as brought by the first people in the beginning of time.
2—Bella Coola woman.

[821] [illegible]: Eclipse.

[illegible]: 1—One who keeps in touch with a concealed Cannibal.
[824] 2—One who has the inherited right to assist *kusiut* or *nusuk* dancers; this prerogative occurs in Kimsquit only.

[illegible]: One of the names of the supreme god.

[illegible]: One of the names of the supreme god.

[illegible]: 1—Synonym for *Skulelowaily*, q.v.
2—Ancestral name of a Bella Coola woman.

[824] [illegible]: A possession, such as a myth or a prerogative, inherited from the distant past, usually from the coming to earth of the first people in the beginning of time.

[illegible]: Ichrio from cones eaten by squirrels.

[illegible], "The First": One of the first men to settle on the Kimsquit River in the beginning of time.

[illegible]: Man mentioned in an origin myth of a southern locality.

[illegible], [illegible], *sxaiz-tmp*: Friends.

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

[728] *yuhumax:* Peace ceremony.
Yulaha: Bella Coola carpenter living in the last century.
yux-imut: Ceremonial error.
[534] *Yuxtsūl:* House of the first settlers at *Sūtla* in the beginning of time.
yut-ax: Rattle.
[425] *yut-umx:* The sending back of a name to the family of its original owners through a return marriage, or the proposal to do so, made by the relatives of the wife.
[589] *yutsalt; plural, yutsūlt; vocative plural, yutsalt:* A woman who has attained an honourable position through being many times repurchased from her husband; virtually, a female chief.
[554] *Yūlqwikaiya:* Kitlobe chief living in the beginning of time.
Yuxstīla: Kuxiut name of a Kimsquit man.
yuxdimut: Fire-holder carried by Thunder.
[825] *yuxs'maiit:* Old, female sea-lion.
Yuxtūx: Ancestral name of a *Sunel* man.
Yuxwemaiit: Ancestral name of a Kimsquit woman.
Yulxtimut: One of the supernatural Carpenters.
[372] *yulxmix:* Sticks for making fire.
yuxtūly: Promontory.
yu'yait: The actual appearance of a performer at an *a'alk* dance during a potlatch.
Yuxwx-t: Lemmy village.
Yuyukmpl: Stone on the shore of Dean Channel believed to have been a man a long time ago.
Yuyulk"mai: 1—One of the first men to settle at *Alpalūsl* in the beginning of time.
2—One of the first men to settle at *Snuhell* in the beginning of time.

6:Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890)1892
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

575 her the secrets of the Kû'siût. She wore ornaments of red cedar-bark
773 around her head, wrists, and ankles; her face was blackened, her hair
776 strewn with eagle-down. She commanded the woman to dance in the same way as she saw her dancing. The people should accompany her dance with songs, and, after she had finished, they should dance with masks. She said, 'Whenever a person sees me your people shall dance the Kû'siût. If you do not do so I shall punish you with death and sickness. In summer, while I am in my house, you must not dance the Kû'siût.'

575 Ever since that time the Bilqula dance the Kû'siût. When a man has
776 seen Anaûlikûtsai'u sitting before her cave he will invite the people to a Kû'siût. A ring made of red and white cedar-bark is hung up in his house, and the uninitiated are not allowed to enter it. Only in the evening, when dances are performed, they may look on, standing close to the door. As soon as the dances are over they must retire from the taboo house. Each Kû'siût lasts three days.

535 The various dances performed by members of the Kû'siût are also the
575 property of the gentes, and the right of performing them is restricted
614 to members of the gens. They must not be given to a daughter's husband,
424 as is the case with the Sisau'ku dances (see above), but belong to the members of the gens alone. They may, however, be loaned and borrowed
[424] by members of the gens, who have a right to a particular dance, but who do not own it. Permission to use a mask or dance is obtained from the owner by payments. The owner may reclaim the dance or the borrower
575 may return it at any time. Membership of the Kû'siût is obtained through an initiation. At this time the novice is given his Kû'siût name, which
[551] he retains throughout life. Each gens has its peculiar Kû'siût names,
[428] which are inherited by young persons from their parents or from other relatives. Thus a young man who had the name of Pô'pô until he was about seventeen years old obtained at his initiation the name of T'akô'etl. I have not reached a very clear understanding of the details of the initia-
[554] tion; it seems that the dance is simply given to the novice in the same way as the Sisau'ku, this initiation being connected with a potlatch. But
[787] still it seems possible that he must 'dream' of the dance which he is to perform. Only the highest degrees of the Kû'siût have to pass through a religious ceremony of some importance. The highest degrees are the
● [554] xlaqô'tla (the Hâ'mats'a of the Kwakiutl), the Ô'laq (the Nû'tlmatl of the Kwakiutl), and the Dâ'tla (the Nû'ntaintatl of the Hê'iltsuk). These grades are also hereditary. A Kû'siût novice may acquire them at once at his first initiation.

575 When the xlaqô'tla is initiated he goes into the forest, where he
785 encounters his guardian spirit. It is believed that he goes up to the sun,
787 and formerly he had to take human flesh along for food. The chiefs hold a council the night preceding the beginning of the ceremonies, and any-
[248] one who wanted to show his liberality offered one of his slaves to be killed, in order to serve as food for the xlaqô'tla. The offer was accepted and a payment of from ten to twenty blankets made for the slave. The latter was killed, and the members of the xlaqô'tla order devoured one-half of the body before the departure of the novice to the woods. There the latter is tied up and left to fast. He may stay there for twenty or thirty days until the spirit appears to him and takes him up to the sun,
575 where he is initiated. Early one morning he returns, and is heard outside the houses. He has lost all his hair, which, it is believed, has been torn

8:Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890)1897
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

woman to dance in the same way as she saw her dancing. The people should accompany her dance with songs, and, after she had finished, they should dance with masks. She said, "Whenever a person sees me, your people shall dance the kū'siut. If you do not do so, I shall punish you with death and sickness. In summer, while I am in my house, you must not dance the kū'siut." 575 773 776 535

Ever since that time the Bi'lxula dance the kū'siut. When a man has seen Anaālikuta'al'x· sitting in front of her cave, he will invite the people to a kū'siut. A ring made of red and white cedar bark is hung up in his house, and the uninitiated are not allowed to enter it. Only in the evening, when dances are performed, they may look on, standing close to the door. As soon as the dances are over, they must retire from the taboo house. Each kū'siut lasts three days. 575 776 535

The various dances performed by members of the kū'siut are also property of the clans, and the right to perform them is restricted to members of the clan. They must not be given to a daughter's husband, as is the case with the sisau'k· dances, but belong to the members of the clan, who have a right to a particular dance, but who do not own it. Permission to use a mask or dance is obtained from the owner by payments. The owner may reclaim the dance or the borrower may return it at any time. Membership of the kū'siut is obtained through an initiation. At this time the novice is given his kū'siut name, which is inherited by young persons from their parents or from other relatives. Thus a young man who had the name of Pō'pō until he was about seventeen years old, obtained at his initiation the name of L!'akō'ot. I have not reached a very clear understanding of the details of the initiation; it seems that the dance is simply given to the novice in the same way as the sisau'k·, this initiation being connected with a potlatch. But still it seems possible that he must "dream" of the dance which he is to perform. Only the highest degrees of the kū'siut have to pass through a religious ceremony of some importance. The highest degrees are the Hlaxō'la (the hā'mats!a of the Kwakiutl), the ō'lEx (the nū'Lmal of the Kwakiutl), and the da'tia (the nō'ntsistalal of the Kwakiutl). These grades are also hereditary. A kū'siut novice may acquire them at once at his first initiation. 535 575 614 575 [426] [551] [428] [556] [171] [554]

When the Hlaxō'la is initiated, he goes into the forest, where he encounters his guardian spirit. It is believed that he goes up to the sun, and formerly he had to take human flesh along for food. The chiefs held a council the night preceding the beginning of the ceremonies, and anyone who wanted to show his liberality offered one of his slaves to be killed in order to serve as food for the Hlaxō'la. The offer was accepted, and a payment of from ten to twenty blankets was made for the slave. The latter was killed, and the members of the Hlaxō'la order devoured one half of the body before the departure of the novice to the woods. There the latter was tied up and left to fast. He may stay there for twenty or thirty days until the spirit appears 575 785 787 [266]